



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. I-12-019

April 20, 2012

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING, OPEN HOUSE IN HAMPTON, N.H., TO DISCUSS SEABROOK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct a public meeting and open house on Thursday, April 26, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Seabrook nuclear power plant.

The open house will take place from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the One Liberty Lane Conference Center, at 1 Liberty Lane East in Hampton, N.H. (Directions are available at: <http://www.onelibertylane.com/contact.php>.) During the open house, members of the public will have an opportunity to talk on a one-on-one basis with NRC inspectors assigned to the plant and their supervisor about the plant-related topics. It will be immediately followed, beginning at 6:30 p.m., by a public meeting at which NRC staff members will present information on the plant's performance and take questions from audience members.

Separately, NRC staff will meet with representatives of NextEra Energy Seabrook, LLC, the plant's owner and operator, on April 23rd at the agency's headquarters in Rockville, Md. That session will deal specifically with concrete degradation identified at the facility and, for those who cannot attend in person, will be accessible via telephone bridge and online webinar. More details are available in the meeting notice posted on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings/index.cfm>.

Seabrook is the site of a single pressurized-water reactor located in Seabrook, N.H.

Overall, Seabrook operated safely during 2011. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed by the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no performance indicators for the plant that were other than "Green" (very low risk) and no inspection findings that were "Greater than Green" (all findings were of very low safety significance). Therefore, for the rest of 2012, Seabrook will receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well. In 2011, the NRC devoted approximately 8,100 hours of inspection to the Seabrook facility.

“Throughout 2011, our inspectors kept close watch on safety performance at all 104 commercial power reactors operating in the United States. Seabrook was among those that met our clearly defined performance criteria last year,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “In addition, our inspectors spent time in 2011 verifying that there were no immediate safety concerns at U.S. nuclear power plants following the March events at the Fukushima Daiichi facility in Japan. Those reviews indicated the plants remained safe for continued operation.”

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with “Green” and then increase to “White,” “Yellow” or “Red,” commensurate with the safety significance of the issues involved. The agency issues reports on performance at specific plants twice a year: during the mid-cycle, or mid-point, of the year, and at the conclusion of the year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC’s web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of an annual assessment report every March, the NRC meets with the public in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the results. The meetings are in keeping with the agency’s commitment to transparency with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment for the Seabrook plant is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/seab_2011q4.pdf. The notice for the open house is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML12101A198. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resource@NRC.GOV.

Routine inspections are carried out by the two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. Among the areas of performance at Seabrook to be inspected this year by NRC specialists are activities associated with radiological safety, emergency preparedness, permanent plant modifications and the facility’s implementation of a voluntary industry initiative to address potential degradation of underground piping. In addition, an Operational Safety Review Team (OSART), performed by a team of international experts led by senior staff members from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), was conducted at Seabrook in June 2011.

Current performance information for Seabrook is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/SEAB1/seab1_chart.html .

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